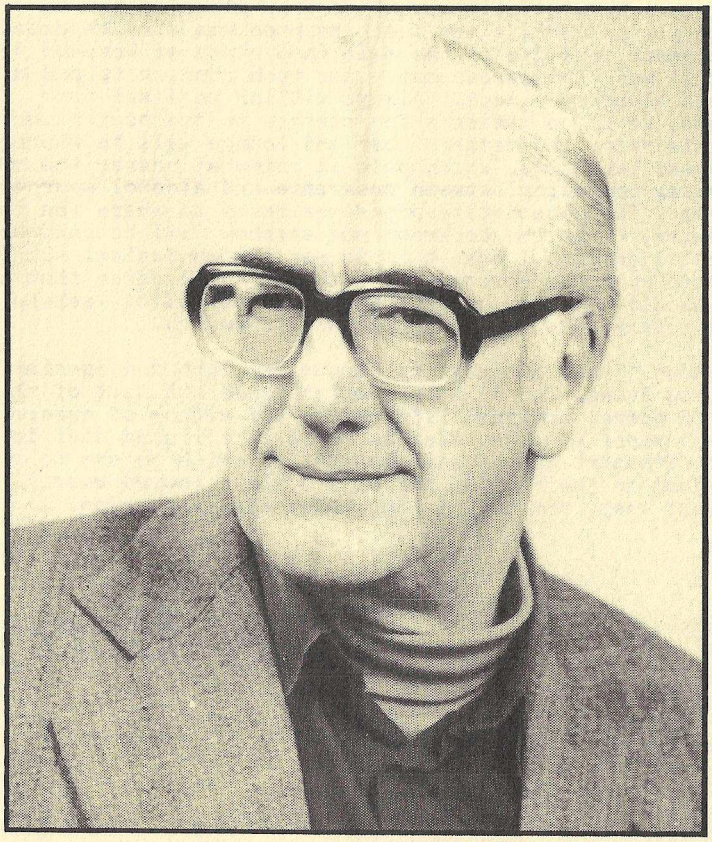
NOVACON 16

31 oct - 2 nov 1986
de vere hotel, coventry



g.o.h **E.C. 'Ted' Tubb**

special guest **Chris Evans**

progress report 1

Chairman's Bit

So, here we are again at the de Vere planning how to entertain you in 1986. A few teething problems must be expected at a new venue, and one of the main complaints at Novacon 15 was that it was "too spread out - too much running up and down stairs and along corridors." Always willing to learn from experience, we'll be making a few changes to the convention layout this year: the members' bar and lounge will be where the bookroom was last time, which puts it somewhat nearer the main hall, making commuting between programme and alcohol source so much easier. The alternative programme moves to where the bar was upstairs, while the bookroom and artshow will be next door in the hotel annexe. I hope this is not too confusing! All will be revealed when you arrive, but I think you'll agree that these changes should make for a less physically demanding weekend (we may even supply anti-static gloves and footwear).

Novacon 16 has as Guest of Honour Ted Tubb and Special Guest Chris Evans. Ted is a long-established stalwart of the British SF scene, original Fifties Fan and author of numerous novels and short stories, whereas Chris is a rising star in the literary firmament who we have managed to catch before he retires to an island in the Pacific and buys a big coloured umbrella. I hope that they, and all of you, enjoy the convention.

Tony Berry

Unless otherwise stated, this PR has been written, typed and assembled by Tony Berry.

Illustration on p6 by Harry Bell.

Contents c 1986 the BSFG.

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The Committee

Tony Berry - Chairman/Hotel Liason.

Last year in charge of the Fan programme, this year promoted to Head Boy. Ex-Leeds University SF Society and Leeds Group, first convention Yorcon 1979. Produces occasional issues of his fanzine Eyeballs in the Sky and was a founder member of Frank's Apa.

Maureen Porter - Programme.

Discovered Fandom through the Oxford Group, first con Fantasycon 1980. A contributor to four Apas, she has spent the last year as administrator of The Womens' Periodical, and joins the team fresh (?) from the committee of Mexicon 2.

Nick Mills - Programme.

Began his fannish career as a member of the Warwick University crowd, first convention Novacon 7 (so where the Hell has he been hiding for the last ten years?) Now, desperate for fame and fortune, he has volunteered for a con committee, which shows how far the brain-damage has progressed.

Graham Poole - Treasurer/Registrations.

Another survivor of Novacon 15, he is again in charge of the financial and membership logistics. Criginally a member of the Cheltenham Group, his first con was Easter 1970. He has in the past produced a number of fanzines including Spaces, Cyclotron and Grapo, but has since lain dormant. However, maybe Real Soon Now....

Darroll Pardoe - Publications.

This year celebrates a quarter-century of Fandom, as if he needed reminding! Produced Les Spinge, the first of many fanzines, in 1966. A graduate of the Stourbridge Group and the original BSFG. Believe it or not this is his first time on a con committee. Telling him what to do is

Ro Pardoe - Publications.

Attended her first convention in 1967 (a mere beginner...) and published her first fanzine a year later. Now the editor of Ghosts and Scholars and various short story booklets. She has served on the committee of a Fantasycon, also as publications supremo.

Rog Peyton - Advertising.

In the dim and distant past this man was Responsible for It All by helping to found the Birmingham Science Fiction Group. A veteran of many Novacon committees (note the haggard expression, bags under the eyes, loss of hair etc.). Most famous as an auctioneer, he has been known to get Arabs bidding fervently for bags of sand.

The Hotel

The De Vere hotel is situated in the centre of Coventry next to the Cathedral and opposite the central bus station. There is free car parking for residents adjoining the hotel for up to 130 cars. The hotel has two restaurants and a coffee shop, also a games room with darts and Pool tables. Wem Real Ale will be available in the bar.

All the bedrooms have their own bathroom, radio, telephone and colour TV. There is an in-house video channel.

Novacon 16	31st October - 2nd November 1986. De Vere Hotel, Cathedral Square, Coventry. Telephone 0203 - 51851 Telex 31380.
Registration	£8.00 (on the door £10.00)
Send to	Graham Poole, 86 Berwood Farm Road, Wylde Green, Sutton Coldfield, West Midlands.
Room Rates	£21.50 single room £16.50 per person in double/twin room. Prices include full English breakfast.

The hotel has 20 single rooms, 18 doubles and 157 twins. There are also 9 family rooms (2 twin rooms sharing a bathroom). Overflow accomodation will again be at the Leofric Hotel, situated about 200 yards from the De Vere. The same room rates apply there.

BEHAVIOUR AT NOVACON -- A WARNING.

Novacon 15 was marred by a spate of theft and vandalism. This cost the convention a considerable sum of money and we will not tolerate it again. You know who you are. I know who you are (I have a list from the management of damage done). I won't publish names, but if you come to the con. we'll take an extra interest in you.

As usual, it's the minority who spoil it for the rest. Most people know how not to incur the enmity of the hotel staff, but, in case you don't, here are a few reminders:

You do not take your own supplies of drink into the hotel. Members found with bottles of booze will be charged corkage. The same applies to food brought to the con.

People found sleeping on the floors of rooms will be charged the full rate. As for laying out sleeping bags in odd corners of the building - forget it.

Walking around in bare feet in your room is fine, but don't do it in the rest of the hotel - especially the restaurant.

In all these cases the committee will back the hotel.

THE NOVACON 16 COMMITTEE RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REFUSE ADMISSION OF ANY INDIVIDUAL TO THE CONVENTION.

Tony Berry - Chairman.

NOVACON

is run annually by the

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TED TUBB by les flood

Introducing the Guest of Honour is customary in the first Progress Report, and is often requisite, but in the case of Edwin Charles Tubb I feel it is almost superfluous as I cannot imagine that the name of 'Ted' Tubb, as he is universally called will be unknown to anyone at Novacon.

Nevertheless, since his last appearance in this capacity was way back in 1970 as co-GoH of the 28th World SF Convention (Heicon) held at Heidelberg in Germany, and not being able to attend most of the recent British meetings, perhaps a heartier welcome than usual may be accorded to him.

For Ted had, in his very prolific output - under a multitude of pseudonyms and embracing all types of category fiction - epitomised the stirring action and adventure style of writing which first instilled that 'sense of wonder' common to most fans. Following his first story sold in 1950 his innumerable short stories have appeared in most of the mass-circulation magazines over the decades. He himself excelled as an editor of the British magazine Authentic Science Fiction for nearly two years until its demise in 1957. His nearly 120 sf novels include the long-running saga of "Earl Dumarest", the eponymous hero of which reflects his creator's persona so well, with the 32nd book just completed. A record, possibly, for a series by one author, running neck and neck with his confrere Ken Bulmer's "Prescot" adventures.

It will be nostalgia time, too, for many of us - veterans of the comparatively exciting conventioneering in the '50s when one of the highlights was Ted's handling of the book auction. His skill in 'spieling' had been honed to perfection by one of his then part-time jobs flogging kitchen cutlery to receptive housewives at departmental stores and fairgrounds. He was, and still is, a tall and imposing figure, now somewhat greyer, full of bonhomie (especially after having partaken of his notorious home-made wines), modest about himself but fluent and often outspoken on all aspects of life, especially Science Fiction and particularly - as Charles Platt in an interview with Ted in 1979 so neatly put it - the "extravagant rhetoric of our prophets and poseurs."

Ted's continuing popularity with his worldwide audience owes much to his consummate story-telling and entertainment value, and his professional writing career steadily continued to prosper even without that elusive (and often one-off) 'best-seller'. One potential blockbuster, The Hammer of Thor, was completed just as Niven-Pournelle's Lucifer's Hammer made its appearence with an uncannily similar theme; Ted's novel remains unpublished although its treatment was more sympathetically characterised and dramatised. I am hoping, as his agent, that one day the timing will be different.

In the meantime Earl Dumarest may, or may not, find his way back to Earth and Ted, whilst pondering the inequities and uncertainties of writing and publishing, will continue to exploit, as he says jokingly, his 'one plot', creating more exciting adventures of the spaceways filled with alluring enchantresses and tough heroes. And, hopefully, enjoy the forthcoming Novacon with his colleagues and fans.

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come along!

RNIB Raffle

During Novacon 15 a raffle was held, the prize for which was a book token to the value of £50. This was won by Jaine Fennell, who has the sort of luck I could do with (she also won the £10 questionnaire prize).

The proceeds of the raffle, and part of those for the auctions of books and things, will finance the recording of a book for the Royal National Institute for the Blind Talking Book Service at a cost of about £250. This covers the initial tape, its duplication and distribution to the various libraries.

There are currently over 5000 fiction/non-fiction titles available from the service, of which about 1% are sf or fantasy. The list, as recent as I could obtain, is as follows:

Amis - The Alteration.
Asimov - Gods Themselves/Bicentennial Man.
Ballard - Crystal World/High Rise.
Blish - Black Easter.
Clarke - Rendezvous with Rama/Fountains of Paradise.
Crichton - Terminal Man.
Crispin - Best SF 6.
Cooper - Seahorse in the Sky/Cloudwalker/Slaves Of Heaven.
Cowper - Clone.
Harrison - In Our Hands the Stars.
Heinlein - I Will Fear No Evil.
Huxley - Brave New World.
Hoyle - October 1st Is Too Late.
Lem - Solaris.
Lewis - Narnia Series.
Orwell - 1984.
Pohl - Gateway/Beyond the Blue Event Horizon/Man Plus.
Silverberg - Lord Valentine's Castle.
Tolkien - Hobbit/Rings.
Varley - Orphiuchi Hotline.
Verne - 20,000 Leagues.
Vonnegut - Slaughrthouse 5.
Watson - God's World.
Wells - Time Machine/War of the Worlds.
Wyndham - Chocky/Midwhich Cuckoos/Triffids.

As you can see, the genre is poorly represented. Something must be done! Three times a year a selection committee meets at the RNIB and decides the latest batch of books to record. These titles are available for sponsorship, but if someone pays the full costs they can specify a choice of their own and, if accepted, that person or group is named on the tape - in our case Novacon and the BSFG.

The book we have in mind is Mythago Wood by Rob Holdstock, which is Triffic and if you haven't read it yet you should. I have written to the Talking Books service with this proposal and I'll keep you posted as to the outcome.

Advertising

Advertisements are welcome for inclusion in Progress Reports 2 and 3 and for the Programme Book. These will be produced in A5 size.

Rates are as follows:

Progress Reports

	Full Page	Half Page	Third Page	Quarter Page
Professional	£24	15	11	9
Non-professional	£16	10	7	6

Programme Book

Professional	30	19	14	11
Non-professional	20	13	10	8

Copy Sizes

Full page	7" x 10½"
Half page	Landscape 7" x 5¼"
	Portrait 3½" x 10½"
Third page	7" x 3½"
Quarter page	3½" x 5¼"

In all cases dimensions are width x height. All copy should be black on white and camera-ready. Half-tones will be charged £5 extra per advert. Please ask for quotes for special requirements such as bleeding-off, reversals etc.

Deadlines for advertising:

Progress Report Two (published early July) -- 1st June 1986.
Progress Report Three (published early October) -- 1st September.
Programme Book (issued at Novacon) -- 15th September.

Please send all copy and enquiries to

Darroll & Ro Pardoe,
38 Marina Village,
Preston Brook,
Runcorn,
Cheshire,
WA7 3BQ. tel. 0928 - 716052.

Membership

1 Ted Tubb
2 Chris Evans
3 Iris Tubb
4 Faith Brooker
5 Tony Berry
6 Graham Poole
7 Maureen Porter
8 Nick Mills
9 Rog Peyton
10 Darroll Pardoe
11 Rosemary Pardoe
12 Chris Southern
13 Jenny Southern
14 Larry van der Putte
15 Mike Westhead
16 Kathy Westhead
17 Roger Robinson
18 Roger Perkins
19 Howard Rosenblum
20 June Rosenblum
21 Dai Price
22 Vince Docherty
23 Jonathan Cowie
24 Oscar Dalgleish
25 Stephen Davies
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27 Owen Whiteoak
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